

New Jersey Family Assistance Center



Update

December 21, 2001

Family Assistance Center Holiday hours

The Family Assistance Center will be closed for the Christmas holiday on Dec. 24 and 25. The Center will reopen at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 26. The FAC also will be closed New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, reopening at 9 a.m., on Wednesday, Jan. 2. The Center will operate on a 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. schedule from Wednesday through Saturday both holiday weeks.

Updates Stemming from Meeting with Families

Family members expressed a number of concerns at the recent meeting at Rutgers University with U.S. Senator Robert Torricelli, U.S. Senator Jon Corzine, Governor-elect Jim McGreevey, Office of Recovery and Victim Assistance Coordinator Lillian Borrone, and approximately 500 families affected by the World Trade Center tragedy. As a result of that meeting, we are taking steps to address the issues of concern that were raised by the families. Following is a report on our progress to date:

◆ Federal and State Contacts

Several members of the audience asked for contact information for the Governor's Office and state and federal representatives. A complete list of the names, mailing addresses and telephone numbers for New

Jersey's legislators, U.S. senators and congressional delegate is attached. The contact information for the Governor's Office is:

Office of the Governor
609-292-6000
P.O. Box 001, Trenton, N.J. 08625

Office of Recovery and
Victim Assistance
609-777-1248

◆ Local Police and N.Y. State Crime Victims Board

We have reached out to local police chiefs in New Jersey and the New York State Crime Victims Board regarding reports of insensitive treatment of victims' families and expressed our concern. We will continue to follow-up on this issue to ensure that any needed corrective action has been taken and your concerns addressed. We will report further on this in an upcoming newsletter.

◆ Fresh Kills Site Visit

In response to concerns over how the materials collected from the World Trade Center are being handled, Attorney General John J. Farmer, Jr. and Coordinator Borrone visited the Fresh Kills site shortly after the Rutgers meeting and did a walk-through of each step of the process taken at the site to locate missing victims or their personal effects.

The effort to identify victims is an around-the-clock duty for which police officers volunteer. The officers are supported by counselors, first aid workers, Red Cross

volunteers, chaplains and staff from the New York City Medical Examiners' Office.

To date, the work done at the site has led to the identification of 34 individuals. Additionally, the remains of another 100 persons are in the process of being examined.

We will continue to monitor the progress of the recovery efforts at this site.

Holiday Gift Program

The Salvation Army and the New Jersey Volunteer Organization for Assistance for Disasters (NJVOAD) have organized a gift program for families of victims of the Sept. 11 attacks. As part of this program, the two organizations will provide families with gift certificates to Toys R Us and local supermarkets.

Acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco has urged all New Jerseyans who want to brighten the holiday season for the families of victims to make a donation to the Salvation Army, NJVOAD or a local charity that can be used for the gift certificates.

For information, contact the Salvation Army at 1-800-SAL ARMY (1-800-725-2769).

PSE&G Holiday Gifts

The employees of PSE&G have generously raised funds to provide holiday gifts for you. Please read the enclosed letter from PSE&G for details.

Bimonthly Family Meetings Planned

The first of several bimonthly meetings planned for 2002 is scheduled for Jan. 26 at Princeton University. The meetings will give families who lost loved ones in the Sept. 11 attack an opportunity to express their concerns and hear the latest on the State's efforts to help them. Governor-Elect Jim McGreevey will take part in the meeting. Additional information will be provided in the next issue of *Family Assistance Center Update*.

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A view of the Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal building and some of the remembrance walls at the Family Assistance Center.

Info Hotline: 866-NJ-CRISIS • www.state.nj.us

Providing Help for September 11 Victims and Their Families
Currently Located at Liberty State Park, Jersey City, New Jersey

Federal Employment Assistance Made Available

The New Jersey Department of Labor has been awarded a \$3.2 million federal emergency grant to fund a One-Stop Career Center in Union County. The Career Center will operate out of the RexPlex Recreation Center on the second floor of the Jersey Gardens Mall in Elizabeth and will provide job search assistance, career counseling and training programs. The career center will open January 15. For more information on the center, call 1-866-827-8276.

Plans to Rebuild at World Trade Center

As crews continue the arduous task of clearing the remaining materials at the World Trade Center site, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey is already developing plans to re-establish PATH service to Lower Manhattan. The Port Authority's plans include the construction of a temporary PATH Station at the World Trade Center site, to open within 24 months. The temporary station will be used until a permanent transportation plan for Lower Manhattan is developed.

In addition to the Port Authority's plans, New York Governor George Pataki and New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani announced the appointment of the Board of Directors for the Lower Manhattan Redevelopment Corporation, to oversee all aspects of revitalizing and rebuilding Lower Manhattan. Lewis Eisenberg will represent New Jersey and the Port Authority on the Board.

The corporation will oversee transportation and other infrastructure improvements, the construction and development of the areas affected by the terrorist attacks and the attraction and retention of business throughout that area.

At this time, no final plans have been made concerning what kind of memorial will be erected at the World Trade Center site in honor of victims.

At the same time, New Jersey has embarked on its own efforts to memorialize the victims of the terrorist attacks.

On October 3, acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco signed Executive Order No. 134 establishing the New Jersey World Trade Center Victims Memorial Commission, which is responsible for identifying and creating a permanent memorial in honor of New Jersey victims.

To date, the Commission, co-chaired by former Governors Brendan Byrne, Tom Kean and Jim Florio, has met twice (No-

ember 8 and December 13) and is scheduled to issue a report with its recommendations by April 2002. The next meeting is planned for late January.

In addition to Governors Byrne, Kean and Florio, other members include:

- ❖ Acting State Treasurer Peter Lawrance
- ❖ Major General Paul J. Glazar, Adjutant General
- ❖ Attorney General John J. Farmer, Jr.
- ❖ Secretary of State DeForest B. Soaries, Jr.
- ❖ Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Shinn
- ❖ Office of Recovery and Victim Assistance Coordinator Lillian Borrone
- ❖ Port Authority Chair Jack G. Sinagra
- ❖ Ronald Burton
- ❖ Joann Corzine
- ❖ Rev. James Loughran
- ❖ Linda Morrone

The Memorial Commission will be asking the public for its input as it develops plans in the months ahead. We will continue to update you as these plans progress.

Bar Associations Offer Legal Response Program

The Essex County Bar Association (ECBA) and the New Jersey State Bar Association (NJSBA) have established several hotlines for World Trade Center attack victims and their families who need free legal consultations and assistance. Callers will be asked general questions to determine their needs and referred to attorneys who will attempt to help them.

The hotlines are:

- ❖ 1-888-4WTCAID
- ❖ 973-622-7753 (Spanish-speaking callers should call this number)
- ❖ 973-622-6207, Ext. 15
- ❖ 1-888-541-1900.

Status of Federal Compensation Fund and Notices of Claim

The U.S. Department of Justice has drafted regulations that will govern the administration of the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund. The law creating the fund was enacted in late September to provide compensation to those who were physically injured or the "personal representative" of those killed in the terrorist attacks.

Kenneth R. Feinberg, a former U.S. Attorney in New York City, was recently appointed Special Master to lead the effort to develop the regulations by today.

The Association of Trial Lawyers of America, New Jersey (ATLA-NJ) is provid-

ing free legal services through its Trial Lawyers Care Program to affected individuals seeking compensation from the fund. For information, e-mail the association at www.911LawHelp.org or call its toll-free line at 888-780-8637.

For those of you who have considered pursuing legal claims against New York City and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the State has sought information on your behalf.

On Dec. 10, consistent with promises made at the family meeting, Attorney General John J. Farmer, Jr. sent a letter to New York City officials seeking an extension of its Dec. 11, 2001 deadline for Notice of Claim filings to sue the city. The letter, sent at the behest of acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco, argued that the extension would "afford these families a fair opportunity to consider their legal options." New York City has declined to extend the 90-day time period.

New Jersey has also learned that the Port Authority's filing period of any claim against it will expire July 11, 2002. No Notice of Claim is required against a private agency.

New Jersey to Post Victim List

Since Sept. 11, a number of news organizations have published lists of people missing or killed in the terrorist attacks in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania. With the help of various law enforcement agencies, the state is completing a list of New Jersey victims that several news organizations have requested.

Rather than send the list to each news organization, we intend to post the list on the State's Web site. This list will only identify each victim by his or her name, age and hometown — not home address or next of kin. This list will serve as the official supplement to the existing New Jersey State Police's "World Trade Center Missing Persons" list.

By posting the list, the state will provide reporters with accurate information. Please note that we are taking every step possible to ensure that this information is not misused and your privacy is protected.

State of New Jersey

Acting Governor Donald T. DiFrancesco
Lillian C. Borrone, Coordinator
Office of Recovery and Victim Assistance

Family Assistance Center Update

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Located at Liberty State Park, Jersey City, New Jersey